


<b>Tower Hamlets Transformation and Improvement Board</b>  26 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	
<b>Report of:</b> Debbie Jones, Corporate Director Children and Culture	<b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted
<b>Children's Services Improvement- Quarterly Progress Report</b>	

<b>Lead Member</b>	Councillor Danny Hassell, Cabinet Member for Children, Schools and Young People
<b>Originating Officer(s)</b>	Nazma Rabbani Children's Services Improvement Manager and Richard Baldwin Divisional Director for Children's Social Care
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards
<b>Community Plan Theme</b>	<b>A fair and prosperous community</b>

**Recommendations:**

The Board is recommended to:

1. Note & comment on the progress made in delivering the children's services improvement programme.
2. Note the next steps in the improvement journey which will be updated on in the next report.

**1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS**

- 1.1 Corporate and political leadership of the Children's Services improvement agenda is a critical part of ensuring its success. Consideration of this report will support this leadership and help to facilitate public scrutiny of progress.

**2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 There are no alternative options to consider.

### **3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

- 3.1 **Current Overview** this report provides an update on progress in delivering improvements to Children's Services in response to the report published by Ofsted in April 2017 which rated our services 'inadequate'. The Council's Improvement plan aims to achieve a standard of 'good' in summer 2019, when it is likely to be next inspected. This is a bold aspiration but we believe the minimum our children and families deserve.
- 3.2 We have now completed five of the six monitoring visits that Ofsted had scheduled with ourselves in order to monitor our improvement journey. The overarching feedback by Ofsted inspectors from these Monitoring visits has been positive, with inspectors pleased with the progress we have made. The visit in August contained a number of specific challenges to us with regard to performance within the Children Looked After Service. Following this challenge we agreed that the December monitoring visit would re-visit this area of service to check progress.
- 3.3 The most recent monitoring visit took place in December 2018, and was positive. Inspectors were also happy with the progress made against the specific issues raised at the August visit.
- 3.4 Our final monitoring visit will occur on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019. This will be followed by an independent Evaluation visit as requested by the DfE and will be undertaken by the London Borough of Bexley. This learning and improvement visit will take place between 10<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> April 2019.
- 3.5 The focus of the final Ofsted Monitoring visit is likely to be on Multi-agency safeguarding hub (MASH), Assessment and Intervention teams and Family Support and Protections services. Inspectors are also very likely to review the practice of these teams in terms of how we manage and mitigate concerns of "neglect" within families.
- 3.6 The independent evaluation is likely to focus across all areas and aspects of practice, with a particular interest on how our performance and quality assurance systems can provide assurance that decision making and planning remain appropriate, consistent and timely.
- 3.7 Following the completion of the final Monitoring visit in March, the full re-inspection of the whole of Children's Social Care has to take place within six months of the last monitoring visit. Therefore we anticipate the full re- inspection between April and October 2019. This inspection will be under the new ILACS framework.

## PROGRESS UPDATE

### 3.8 Staff Recruitment and Retention-

Our Year One targets are on track

- Target 1 – recruit 35 NQSW – 29 to date (on target)
- Target 2 – convert 6 agency workers to permanent – 10 to date (target met and exceeded)
- Target 3 – recruit 14 experienced SWs – 16 to date (target met and exceeded)
- Turnover target of 15% - currently 11.% (target met and exceeded)
- Total vacancies target of 93 – currently 68 (target met and exceeded)
- Total vacancies % of 35% - currently 26% (target met and exceeded)

3.9 The number of agency workers as a percentage of total establishment (including posts over establishment) has reduced to 32.7% (33.5% in December 2018).

### 3.10 Workforce Stability

Workforce stability overall has improved throughout 2018 and into 2019. The annual turnover figure has reduced from 11.6% in December 2018 to 11% at the end of January 2019.

Sickness absence has reduced from 10.26 days per FTE in April to 8.54 days per FTE in December 2018. This is an increase by 0.13 days per FTE compared to 8.41 days in November 2018 (latest figures are two months in arrears); however it is still significantly lower than the Council's average.

The breakdown of sickness absence by Service area is as follows:

Level 3 – Service	Average FTE Days Lost	Average FTE Days Lost	Average FTE Days Lost
	End March 2018	End Nov 2018	End Dec 2018
Assessment & Early Intervention	18.69	9.43	10.05
Safeguarding and Quality Assurance	5.51	7	9.07
Children Looked After & Leaving Care	13.58	9.13	7.12
Children's Resources	11.62	8.37	10.46
CWD AND CAMHS	4.44	8.68	8.44
Family Support & Protection	5.44	7.73	7.01
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>10.26</b>	<b>8.41</b>	<b>8.54</b>
Council Average FTE days lost	<b>10.97</b>	<b>10.89</b>	<b>10.94</b>

Based on the top point of PO3, the daily cost (including on-costs) of employing a social worker is c. £205.00. If sickness is reduced by one day per FTE per annum, this equates to an additional 210 days worked per annum (total cost c. £43K). Whilst this is not a cashable saving, some savings could be achieved by not backfilling the gaps with agency staff.

- 3.11 **Social Work Academy** was formally launched on 5<sup>th</sup> December 2018, the event was very well attended. There was presence from the three university partners (Royal Holloway, UEL and LMU) and other key organisations. The general feedback was positive with some helpful challenges, such as having more focus on social worker experience and more discussion around the training offer for social workers.
- 3.12 The academy is on track with recruitment and will have recruited 35 ASYEs (Assisted and Supported Year in Employment) by the end of February 2019. We have appointed an ASYE coordinator exclusively for Children's Social Care. This appointment will ensure that the ASYEs have the support that they need on a daily basis. The ASYE assessor's panel will meet every quarter to evaluate the progress of every ASYE and make sure appropriate support is provided at the earliest point of need.
- 3.13 Historically, CSC has spent up to £500,000 every year on training programmes. However, we have been unsuccessful in consulting staff on their training needs or incorporating feedback about the quality of the training that was being delivered. A Learning Needs Survey was therefore commissioned in December 2018 to engage staff and understand their learning needs. We are working to a very tight time- scale but the aspiration is to re-commission a training schedule based on staff feedback and invite university partners into training delivery wherever possible.
- 3.14 The first draft of the benefit tracker system to track staff establishment and agency spend will be presented to the academy steering group on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2019. This will be monitored by the chair of the academy steering group, the Divisional Director. A Social Care Health check is also planned for 2019.
- 3.15 **Restorative Practice-** The embedding of restorative practice continues at pace, and this is now starting to have wider impact. Verbal feedback from the most recent Ofsted monitoring visit in December confirmed that the benefits of the restorative model are now being evidenced within planning and direct interactions with families. Discussions on the floor are apparent, and its influence and impact is starting to be tangibly felt. The recent social work academy launch further highlighted the strength within this practice model, with relationships being a key cornerstone of our practice model.
- 3.16 Throughout 2018 training continued, with the final commissioned training taking place in January 2019. This will result in over 300 social care staff, alongside senior leaders, and identified partners through the LSCB and early help undertaking training. Linked directly to this has been the post-training support through the delivery of the follow up sessions, which have been well utilised.

- 3.17 The next phase has been the identification of the ‘train the trainer’ programme, and this is to be delivered in March 2019. This will enable us to become self-sufficient in delivering this after training. In conjunction the scope and target group for the training is widening, with focus shifting to our early help colleagues, and this programme will start to be delivered in 2019.
- 3.18 The task and finish group continues to meet and progress with implementation and embedment of the model. The most notable shift has been the group’s link with the newly created social work academy. The link with the academy provides oversight and scrutiny, as well as critical challenge and support in delivery. As part of our ongoing embedment of the model, we are now working closely to develop a framework and model of practice within the Safeguarding and Quality Audit Service to further enhance the models physical presence within the social care system.
- 3.19 A visit to Leeds City Council took place on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> February. The focus of the visit was to understand their journey towards embedding Restorative Practice and to identify any learning that would be helpful to support our improvement journey. The visit comprised a number of staff at all levels of the organisation including the DCS, Lead Member and Divisional Director and was beneficial in supporting our implementation of Restorative Practice as well as learning from their successful improvement journey. One of the key developments from this has been the agreement for Leeds to come and deliver a workshop with our Team Managers on how Restorative Practice is embedded into everyday practice within teams.
- 3.20 **Neglect** -From our discussion with Ofsted inspectors and from analysing the key themes and recommendations of recent ILCAS inspections of other Local Authorities, we can be reasonably confident that the final monitoring visit will contain a strong emphasis on how we manage cases where “neglect” is a key concern. The focus on our “front-door” teams also lends itself for inspectors to provide a level of challenge and scrutiny on how aware staffs are of these sorts of concern, and how quick they respond and provide assistance to families where neglect has been recognised.
- 3.21 In order to fully prepare for this we have already begun work to ensure that staff have additional training in recognising neglect, and are provided with tools and resources that will assist them to further strengthen the existing work we provide in relation to this. The author of one of these tools, Jane Wiffin has been commissioned to provide additional training and guidance and support with the development of a new neglect strategy.
- 3.22 We have also recently launched a pilot project in conjunction with colleagues within the Early Help Service to provide an “Integrated Offer” for families at risk of neglect. This work will link dedicated Social Workers, Children’s Centres and schools together to address neglect concerns at an early stage of identification. The pilot starts with the cluster of schools in the North-East of the Borough and will then be rolled out into other areas.
- 3.23 **Initial Health Assessments** Every Looked After child must have an initial health assessment to understand their health /medical needs which is undertaken by a registered medical practitioner at the initial stage of coming into care, then at specified interval depending on the child's age.

3.24 The previous Ofsted monitoring visit highlighted the poor performance of Initial Health Assessments which at the point of the visit were 22% within timescale. Following on from the close work with partners in the CCG and at Barts Trust to improve performance, demonstrable progress has been made. The figure reported for December 2018 is 91%, significantly higher than the 55% reported in November 2018. The indicative figure for January 2019 is 71% although the number of children coming into care was much smaller. Although there is still some way to go with regard to improving this figure it is clear that performance is continuing to improve and the work has engendered some positive cross partnership working. Early indications are that more children are having their health assessments within the 28 day timescales.

3.25 **Audit Culture** the quality assurance and audit programme was fully launched in August 2017 and we are continuing to use audit activity systematically to inform our improvement activity. Ofsted commented in their second monitoring visit that the use of audit was becoming more embedded although they felt that some improvement was needed in its effectiveness to support the improvement journey. In addition to the full audit schedule, dip sampling continues to take place to support the understanding of social work delivery for children.

3.26 We have continued to audit between 35-45 cases per month, and January has also seen a further round of audit activity. These audits are now firmly embedded within the overall management activity which is positive in terms of ensuring that all aspects of the improvement journey become embedded within “business as usual” for Children’s Services post inspection.

3.27 The December inspection confirmed that inspectors felt positive about the improvements we have made to our audit activity, and the most recent Ofsted letter states...

*“Learning from routine audit activity and detailed analysis of key findings are leading to continuous improved performance in the quality of the work in frontline teams”*

In January, 42 case audits were undertaken. Approximately half of the cases both the auditor and moderator came to the conclusion that the cases meet the standard of ‘good’. In 36 of the 42 audits both the auditor and moderator came to the same conclusion. This demonstrates that there is greater consistency in the judgements of the auditor and moderator. Any cases that are a cause for concern are flagged to the relevant service manager for action and are audited again in three months. Audits are conducted alongside the social worker for the case and further consideration is being given as to how these audits can be more restorative in their approach, in line with our practice model. There is a broad fit of themes from our internal audits with the outcome of an external audit that took place with three qualified HMIs. This gives further confidence in the accuracy and rigour of our auditing.

3.28 On the basis that we anticipate a focus on Neglect at the next Monitoring visit we will focus some additional audit activity on the following areas over the coming months;

- Identification and response to Neglect concerns
- Threshold decision making in MASH
- Links with Early Help services (particularly in relation to “Step-down” decisions)
- Cases which resulted in Emergency Protection/Police Protection actions
- Re-Referrals
- Pre-Birth assessments (responsiveness and quality of planning)

3.29 **Practice Week** as part of embedding Quality Assurance Tower Hamlets’ most recent practice week took place on the week commencing Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November 2018, where senior leaders spend time with frontline social workers reviewing cases and shadowing their work with children and families in order to better understand their day to day experience. This Practice week was broader and more detailed than previously, and benefited from the support from the London Borough of Islington. Initial feedback from senior managers, councillors and service users is indicative that the level of professionalism and quality of practice is improving and becoming stronger. Observations and audits undertaken by managers by our practice improvement partner in Islington also fed back on the quality of front-line managers and practice within the Leaving Care Service.

3.30 The recent Ofsted Monitoring visit also commented positively on the development of the Practice Week, the strengthened engagement with Senior Managers and Members, and particularly on the positive service user feed-back which came from the telephone survey.

3.31 **Sufficiency** -The Sufficiency Strategy has now been updated and has been agreed by DLT. The strategy covers a three year period from December 2018-December 2021 and addresses how we will use a mixed economy for placement usage that continues to maximise value for money whilst also ensuring that placements meet the needs of our looked after children population.

3.32 The current provision of the Edge of Care Service is also under review with the intention to extend the service from just providing intervention to those families with immediate and pressing concerns of family breakdown to a more pro-active approach that begins to provide services to families across a broader continuum of need. It is proposed that Edge of Care will provide intervention to families where there are safeguarding concerns to help reduce the risk of children and young people coming into care.

3.33 **Care Leavers/Through Care Service**  
The development of the new Through-Care Service continues. Staff from KitKat Terrace moved into Mulberry Place in November 2018 and the benefits of developing closer links with both CLA teams and the Virtual School are already being seen in the development of new PEP reports for Care-Leavers, and smoother transfers of young people between the two parts of the service.

- 3.34 We have also begun the next phase of the development by commencing the process of identifying which managers and staff will move into the two teams who will be designated to focus on CLA from 14 yrs upwards. This process has now been completed, and staff have been actively involved in designing a process for agreeing which staff and cases will move across into the new team which will go live on 1<sup>st</sup> April.
- 3.35 The process of over-seeing these changes is being managed by a Task and Finish group made up of front-line managers and staff, which has been positive in modelling a restorative and inclusive approach to change. The past month has seen considerable work being undertaken by the group of staff on the implementation “Task and Finish” group to identify the staff and cases that will move from the CLA team into the new 14+ team. This work has resulted in one team manager and six social workers expressing a preference to move across into the new team which will be launched on the 1st April. The group have also identified the first cohort of cases that will move across into the new service which means that we are on track to launch as planned. The new arrangements will be reviewed at the end of June in order to identify any further adjustments which may be required.
- 3.36 **Ofsted monitoring visit in December 2018** Ofsted visited for their fifth monitoring visit on the 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> December 2018. This visit was focused on looked after children, child permanence and the leaving care service. This followed a visit in August 2018 which looked at many of the same areas (excluding LCS) which while still positive overall, highlighted a number of areas where Ofsted felt progress needed to be escalated.
- 3.37 During the visit, Ofsted spent time with social workers and managers in both the Looked After and Leaving Care Services and met with senior managers and the chair of the Foster Carer’s Association.
- 3.38 The feedback from the inspectors at the end of both days of the visit was very positive. They commented particularly on the progress made since August which included that all looked after children now have an up to date single assessment and that our permanence planning processes are now considering multiple options concurrently.
- 3.39 Inspectors spent a significant amount of time in the Leaving Care Service and highlighted numerous areas of good practice including with unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people in custody. They commented that the move towards the Through-care service was the right one, however they challenged us to escalate the pace in which this is progressed.
- 3.40 Inspectors looked at some of our most recent entries to care, including a number of children who had been police protected due to high levels of neglect. Inspectors felt that in the minority of these cases, children had been in harmful situations for too long. This has been accepted and work is ongoing to ensure that the plans for children in neglectful situations are robust and action is taken quickly if the situation further deteriorates.



- 3.41 The final monitoring visit will occur on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019. This will be followed by an independent evaluation visit as requested by the DfE and will be undertaken by the London Borough of Bexley. This learning and improvement visit will take place between 10<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> April 2019.
- 3.42 The focus of the final Ofsted Monitoring visit will be on Assessment and Intervention teams and Family Support and Protections services. Inspectors are also very likely to review the practice of these teams in terms of how we manage and mitigate concerns of “neglect” within families.
- 3.43 The independent evaluation is likely to focus across all areas and aspects of practice, with a particular interest on how performance and quality assurance systems can provide assurance that decision making and planning remain appropriate, consistent and timely.
- 3.44 Following the completion of the final Monitoring visit in March 2019, the full re-inspection of the whole of Children’s Social Care has to take place within six months of the last monitoring visit. Our inspection window is therefore May – September and we are making plans for this to take place before the summer holidays.
- 3.45 **Bexley Learning and Improvement Review** Staff from LBTH visited Bexley on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2018 for a discussion about the independent evaluation that they will undertake. This has been commissioned by the Department for Education (DfE) and will take place on the 10<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> April with the final day being used to feed back to the leadership. The team will comprise of seven senior leaders from Bexley including the Director of Children’s Services (DCS) and Assistant Director (AD).
- 3.46 The review will also focus on collaborative audit, our corporate services, our self-assessment and the Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO) footprint as well as the overall quality of social work. It will be crucial to consider carefully how we communicate messages to staff, ensuring that it is seen as a supportive measure in our final push towards the full re-inspection.
- 3.47 The Bexley approach focuses very heavily on performance. A group of staff from Tower Hamlets went to Bexley on the 29<sup>th</sup> January to observe their performance meeting with the purpose of learning from their approach to monitoring performance and continuous improvement. Senior Managers from Bexley also attended the most recent Tower Hamlets Operations Board (26<sup>th</sup> February) which also monitors performance for a reciprocal visit as part of their preparation for the Learning and Improvement review.
- 3.48 There was also a visit to Bromley who had recently been re-inspected. They were in a similar position to us as they had been rated as inadequate in the previous inspection and have recently been re-inspected and rated as Good overall.

### 3.51 **Performance measures – see KPI Table below on 3.54**

The majority of key Performance indicators for January have re-gained the positive trajectory seen in the months prior to December. Some aspects of performance dipped in December and were affected by Christmas leave and preparations for the December monitoring visit. However the January data confirms that most key indicators have re-established their positive trend lines. The timely response to contacts and referral are positive, as is the broader improvements in the timeliness of Single Assessments over the past 12 months. The numbers of children on CP Plans and in care remains steady, both of which are indicative of a good and consistent understanding of thresholds.

## Performance table- Summary overview of key performance indicators JANUARY 2019

Children's Social Care Highlight Indicators															
This report provides summary overview of KPIs linked to child-centred performance management data being used in support of performance improvement across CSC															
Performance measure title and reference		Performance from previous financial year	Performance for current period (either snapshot, YTD or rolling year depending on measure) - plus last six monthly performance outturns (where available)										Agreed targets (using corporate minimum/upper model)	Trend line for last 6 months performance	
Ref	Performance Measure	2017/18	Current Performance										Target		Trend
			Num	Denom	Current	Period	Six Month Trend						Min	Upper	
							Aug 18	Sep 18	Oct 18	Nov 18	Dec 18	Jan 19			
<b>Management Oversight</b>															
1.1	% cases with Management Oversight recorded in past 8 weeks	96%	2,873	2,971	96.7%	Snapshot	97.6%	96.5%	94.4%	96.8%	91.1%	96.7%	90%	95%	
<b>Cohorts</b>															
1.2	Number of CIN (exc. LAC, CP, Care Leavers)	1,034	n/a	n/a	1,084	Snapshot	962	981	997	999	1,097	1,084			
1.3	Number of children subject to CPP	292	n/a	n/a	274	Snapshot	294	274	277	269	258	274			
1.4	Number of LAC	290	n/a	n/a	338	Snapshot	303	311	322	353	335	338			
<b>Front door / assessment</b>															
2.1	% of contacts completed within 1 day	62.0%	11,793	12,131	97.2%	YTD	99.2%	97.3%	98.3%	97.5%	97.2%	97.4%	90%	95%	
2.10	% of assessments completed within 45 working days	72.7%	3,959	4,326	91.5%	YTD	96.4%	93.0%	95.0%	92.2%	75.4%	87.2%	90%	95%	
<b>Plans</b>															
3.1	% of children in need with CIN Plan completed	86.1%	938	1,084	86.5%	Snapshot	88.7%	87.3%	85.1%	88.0%	83.3%	86.5%	90%	95%	
<b>Visits</b>															
3.3a	% of CIN children visited within the past four weeks (Incl. CWD)	84.0%	938	1,084	86.5%	Snapshot	75.1%	71.5%	80.7%	81.5%	78.5%	86.5%	90%	95%	
4.6	% children on a child protection plan receiving a visit within the past four weeks	95.0%	264	274	96.4%	Snapshot	89.1%	94.2%	94.3%	94.8%	93.4%	96.4%	90%	95%	
5.1	% of LAC Single Assessments not yet completed or out of the one year timescale		14	338	4.1%	Snapshot	0.0%	43.1%	3.7%	0.6%	3.9%	4.1%	15%	10%	
5.11	% of LAC with visits in last 6 weeks (LAC <12 months)	91.0%	148	155	95.5%	Snapshot	89.4%	93.0%	85.6%	84.5%	92.5%	95.5%	90%	95%	
5.12	% of LAC with visits in last 13 weeks (LAC > 12 months)	100.0%	178	179	99.4%	Snapshot	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	99.5%	100.0%	99.4%	90%	95%	
<b>Reviews</b>															
3.2	% of children with CIN Plan with reviews within last 6 months	94.0%	923	938	98.4%	Snapshot	95.0%	94.5%	96.9%	98.2%	94.7%	98.4%	90%	95%	
4.7	% of CP reviews carried out within statutory timescales	96.0%	185	186	99.5%	Snapshot	97.9%	98.0%	99.0%	99.5%	99.4%	99.5%	95%	98%	
5.18	CLA cases which were reviewed within required timescales	81.1%	315	319	98.7%	Rolling Year	88.1%	91.0%	91.3%	91.3%	98.8%	98.7%	95%	100%	
<b>Care Leavers</b>															
6.1	% care leavers "in touch" (17,18,19,20,21 yr. olds with activity updated within last year)	96.8%	251	258	97.3%	Snapshot	80.2%	90.0%	92.9%	93.4%	88.7%	97.3%	90%	95%	
6.2	% care leavers EET	67.6%	178	258	69.0%	Snapshot	52.2%	57.6%	59.9%	65.1%	62.7%	69.0%	65%	75%	
6.30	% care leavers in suitable accommodation	91.0%	237	258	91.9%	Snapshot	71.7%	80.3%	82.5%	87.8%	82.0%	91.9%	91%	91%	
<b>Audit Activity</b>															
11.13	Overall audit quality score (lower is better)		51	17	2.5	Snapshot	-	2.4	2.6	2.4	-	2.5	2	1	

#### **4. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 Ensuring that we are providing good services to vulnerable children and their families will ensure that some of our most disadvantaged children are effectively supported to maximise their life chances.

#### **5. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Safeguarding children is a core focus of the improvement plan.
- 5.2 The Ofsted judgement rated our local safeguarding children board 'inadequate.' Work is underway to address this finding and improve the work of the board.
- 5.3 Work is ongoing to develop new safeguarding arrangements consistent with new regulations as set out in *Working Together 2018*.

#### **6. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

- 6.1 Significant additional resources have already been identified as part of the 2017 2020 MTFS; in particular total additional growth of £5.2m addressing pressure in a range of areas, most of which feature in the improvement plan.
- 6.2 Additional one-off investment funding via the Council's Transformation Reserve is being used to support the implementation of the Children's Services improvement plan. The estimated cost of this plan over 2 years is expected to be £4.2m (of which £1.9m was spent in 2017/18)
- 6.3 The level of one-off funding is based on a detailed assessment of the costs associated with the improvement plan and the improvements that will be achieved as a result of the investment have also been identified and are regularly monitored.

#### **7. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

- 7.1 The framework for Ofsted inspections of Children's Services is set out in sections 135-142 of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 ('the Act') and associated Employment and Education Act 2006 (Inspection of Local Authorities) Regulations 2007 ('the Regulations'). Tower Hamlets was inspected in January 2017 under Ofsted's "Framework and evaluation schedule for the inspections of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers and Reviews of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards" ('the SIF'), and assessed as being inadequate.
- 7.2 In light of Tower Hamlets' improved performance during monitoring visits, Ofsted will re-inspect under the ILACS framework, "Framework, evaluation criteria and inspector guidance for the inspections of local authority children's services",

introduced in November 2017. If the outcome of the subsequent re-inspection is better than inadequate, the Council will then follow the pathway for local authorities which either require improvement, or are graded good.

- 7.3 The recommendations that the Mayor in Cabinet should endorse the progress made in delivering the children's services improvement programme and agree the next steps in the improvement journey, are consistent with the Council's duty to secure continuous improvement in its functions. Failure to make the necessary improvements to children's services could result in the Secretary of State appointing a Children's Services Commissioner or removing service control from the Council.

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## **Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents**

### **Linked Report**

- NONE

### **Appendices**

- NONE

### **Background Documents – Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements)(Access to Information)(England) Regulations 2012**

- NONE

**Officer contact details for documents:** N/A